the Minister whether the North Eastern Council had been negotiating with the land owners for the acquisition and the purchase of about 200 acres of land in the vicinity of Shillong to accommodate the complex of its different offices.

श्री सुबोध कान्त सहाय : सभापति महोदय, यह सही है कि सेक्रटरिएट को पूरी तरह से व्यवस्थित रूप से चलाने के लिए सरकार इस दिशा में कार्यवाही कर रही है और नगोशिएशन भी चल रहा है। अभी पिछली मीटिंग में ही, जो दो दिन पहले हुई थी, इस पर चर्चा हुई है लेकिन अभी कोई ठोस रूपरेखा सामने नहीं है।

SHRI G. G. SWELL: I would like to know whether they are negotiating for the acquisition or purchase of 200 acres of land in the vicinity of Shillong. It is my specific question.

श्री सुबोध कान्त सहाय : नैगोशिएशन के बारे में मैंने कहा कि नैगोशिएशन तो जरूर चल रहा है लेकिन कोई शेपइसने नहीं ली है। इसलिए इसके बारे में मैं अभी कोई जवाब नहीं दे सकता।

DR. NAGEN SAIKIA: Sir, there is a long-standing demand of Assam to have a bridge over Brahmaputra near Bogivil at Dibrugarh. And its people and many organisations have approached the Government of India many times. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether he will consider a project to construct the bridge over Brahmaputra near Bogivil at Dibrugarh.

श्री सुबोध कान्त सहाय : उपसभापति महोदय, यह जो एन० ई० सी० में फैसला हो गया है, इसे संबंधित मंत्रालय को कार्यवाही के लिए भेजा जा रहा है।

श्री सभापति : यानी आपने इसे सिद्धांततः स्वीकार कर लिया है।

श्री सुबोध कान्त सहाय : जी हां।

ब्रिटेन से आने वालों के लिये वीजा के नियमों में परिवर्तन

*283. **श्री सुरेश पचौरी** :
श्रीमती मारग्रेट आल्वा :

क्या विदेश मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि ब्रिटेन से भारत आने वालों के लिये वीजा नियम हाल में बदल दिये गये हैं; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं?

विदेश मंत्री (श्री इन्द्रकुमार गुजराल) (क) हाल ही में हमने विदेशी राष्ट्रिकों के एक विशेष वर्ग के संबंध में अपनी वीजा नीति को उदार बनाया है जिसमें ब्रिटिश नागरिक भी शामिल हैं जो अक्सर भारत में आते हैं।

(ख) यह उदारता वस्तुतः हमारी वीजा नीति के सामान्य स्वरूप का ही एक हिस्सा है।

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : माननीय सभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि ऐसे कौन से कारण हैं जिनकी वजह से ब्रिटिश-नागरिकों के लिए वीसा नीति में संशोधन किया गया? क्या ब्रिटिश सरकार भी, जो भारतवासी वहां जाना चाहते हैं उन्हें वीसा देने में ऐसी ही समानता का रुख अपनाते हुए उदारता बरतेगी? क्या ऐसा कोई अनुबंध भारत सरकार ने ब्रिटिश गवर्नमेंट के साथ किया है? वीसा नीति को उदार करने से भारत को क्या लाभ पहुंचा है? वीसा नीति के उदार बनने के बाद क्या भारत में आने वाले ब्रिटिश-नागरिकों की संख्या में वृद्धि हुई है? क्या उदार वीसा नीति के तहत ही "ऐमनैस्टी इंटरनेशनल" को भारत में आने की इजाजत दी गई?

---

*सभा में यह प्रश्न श्री सुरेश पचौरी द्वारा पूछा गया।

श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल : सभापति महोदय; वीसा नीति को उदार बनाने के कई फ़ायदे हैं--एक तो यह है कि हमारे देश के नागरिक जो बाहर बसे हुए हैं उनको आने-जाने में काफ़ी सुविधा होती है। दूसरा फ़ायदा यह है कि जो लोग हिंदुस्तान के साथ व्यापार करना चाहते हैं उनको आने में आसानी रहती है।

महोदय; हर देश अपनी वीसा नीति अपने हालात को देखकर बनाता है। अब अंग्रेज क्या करेंगे क्या नहीं करेंगे वह तो अलग बात है लेकिन हमारी वीसा पालिसी में हमने जो छूट दी है; वह हमारे हालात के मुताबिक है।

महोदय; जहां तक "ऐमनस्टी इंटरनेशनल" का ताल्लुक है; इसका वीसा नीति को उदार बनाने से कोई संबंध नहीं है।

श्री सुरेश पचौरी : मान्यवर, मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि इस नीति को उदार बनाने के लिए संशोधन कब किया गया? मेरा दूसरा सवाल यह है कि क्या वीसा नीति उन लोगों के लिए भी उदार की जाएगी जो अन्य देशों से, ब्रिटेन के अलावा अन्य देशों से, भारत में आना चाहते हैं?

श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल : जी हां, वीसा नीति सभी देशों के लिए उदार बनाई गई है और यह जुलाई, 1990 से ही लागू की गई है।

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Sir, the Minister has said that there is a general revision of policy as far as visas are concerned. I would like to ask the hon. Minister specifically which are the countries for which they have liberalised visa fees and visa rules. Sir, what I understand is that the liberalisation in the case of Britain alone is going to cost us more than a million pounds a year in foreign exchange through loss of the visa fees that we are getting. On the other hand, the Government has been talking about reducing the expenses on our High Commission in Britain, has been talking about saving foreign exchange and reducing expenses, but at the same time, Sir, the Government has gone ahead, reducing the visa fees and issued almost 10 year visas, re-entry visas. Those who come regularly to India, I would like to point out, are rich businessmen, are people who keep coming repeatedly because of business or other interests at company's cost and they can afford to pay the visa fee. Therefore, I would like to ask the Minister specifically whether it is not a fact that over a million pounds are going to be lost by way of visa fees by our High Commission there. Secondly, how many countries are they negotiating with? I know it for a fact. though the Minister has said something else, that Britain has not reciprocated this gesture on our part though most of these exchanges are on a reciprocal basis. If we have reduced the fees and given a ten-year visa for British nationals and others, they should do the same for Indians which they have not yet done. In fact, they have gone on record saying that this is not under their immediate consideration. In that case why have we done it unilaterally? May I just add, one fact. In this whole liberalisation effort, I want to ask the Minister whether it is not a fact, that it has been repeatedly said, that our High Commissioner to Britain is not a High Commissioner to White Hall but to South hall. All that he is worried about is going to Southall and making statements about the Indians there. I am all for them Nobody says he should not go there. But in the process even those who have been involved actively and openly with the Khalistan movement, with the secessionist movement, funding it, are being given re-entry, multiple re-entry, visas now, when they were not allowed to come in the past And ont of them whose passport was impounded accompained our High Commissioner in Britain to India. With him he came to India, visited various places in Punjab and

back, when his passport had been impounded by our Government earlier in this country. Are these the liberalised rules that the Foreign Office is now propagating? That is my question.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: My honourable friend has raised several issues. I will try to respond to them. One, the visa policies are not a projection of foreign policy. The visa policies keep in mind several things—our own citizens staying abroad, the inttrests of commerce and industry and the interests of tourism. All these things are kept in mind when a visa policy is follew. In India we have a tradition of a very liberal visa policy. Unfortunattly after the Punjab situation some steps had to be taken which were justified. But now we feel that a situation has come when we must relent and relenting is helping us. There is a great deal of lessening of tensions and there is a great deal of projection of India's image as it was always and as it should be. So far as the question of the High Commissioner going to Southall is concerned, I am glad to receive the certificate from my honourable friend, because, I think one of the usual complaints against our Ambassodars and High Commissioners is that they do not care for Indians. I am glad there is a High Commissioner who is carrin for the Indians and the Indians living there ...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: They are all British nationals of Indian origin.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Let me respond completely.

Therefore, I think in a way this House should applaud the people who are now caring for the Indians who live there. Up till now the difficulty has been—that has been our grievance; even as a private citizen that was my grievance—that our diplomatic corps does not take as much care of the Indians abroad as it should. There were difficulties in Southall. It is a fact. It is a fact that the Punjab situation was reflected in Southall as well. We cannot write it of for all times. We have to end the alienation, we have to win back the sympathies and also isolate the few who are beyond us. Visa is not a policy instrument for that purpose The people who come here see India living normally, see the type of situation in Punjab where every Sikh is contributing his best to Indian unity and to Indian peace and the integrity of India. That sends a message more than anything else. Keeping out people whose families are staying here does not help.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: What about the loss of a million pounds a year?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I beg your pardon... zz

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please answer her million pound question.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I am sorry. I beg your pardon. You will agree with me that her question was so complex and contained so many issues and unfortunately my memory is not as sharp as hers...

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Very conveniently he could not remember that specific question.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: So far as income from visas is concerned, let us keep one thing in mind. Visa is not an instrument for fund-raising. This is one thing which you must keep in mind. Everybody who comes here compensates in different fashions. You can make it formidable and you can say you will charge twenty thousand pounds. All right. But then nobody will come.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Then why have you raised it?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Just a minute. Our assessment is this: The visa fees were raised at a particular time for particular reasons and those reasons, in our assessment, do not exist any more and, therefore, when people come here, spend their money here, do business here, come as tourists, we get more than compensated and also liberalisation has made more people come here and the figure which my honourable friend has given is somewhat exaggerated.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It is not exaggerated; but it is the exact figure. Now, what about the reciprocal arrangement? You have not answered that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has clearly stated that it should not be reciprocal and that has to be by diplomatic efforts... (*Interruptions*)...You cannot put your ideas into his mind. He has to work according to his approach to the problem and he says... (*Interruptions*)... that it is not receiprocal.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It has to be reciprocal, Sir, ... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Hanspal.

श्री हरवेन्द्र सिंह हंसपाल: मुझे इस बात की खुशी है कि यू० के० में अपने वीजा पालिसी को लिबरेलाइज किया। जो लोग वहां से, इंगलैंड से, हिन्दुस्तान में आना चाहते हैं उन्हें आसानी हो गई है, यह बात बहुत सही है। आई एप्रिशिएट इट और मैं इसको बोथ हार्टेडली सपोर्ट करता हूं। जो हिन्दुस्तानी इंगलैंड में बसे हुए हैं उनको बहुत परेशानी थी, उनको आने में बड़ी परेशानी थी। मैं इस बात में मंत्री महोदय से [illegible] लेकिन साथ साथ मैं [illegible] कहना चाहता कि जो लोग वहां इंगलैंड में रह रहे हैं उनसे मिलने के लिए जाने वालों के लिए आप क्या कर रहे हैं? जो इंगलैंड में रहते हैं उनके भी रिश्तेदार यहां रहते हैं। आप जानते हैं कि मौतें होती हैं और शादियां भी होती हैं और इस तरह से खुशी और गम के मौके भी आते रहते हैं तो यहां के लोगों को वहां जाना पड़ता है, क्या उसके लिए भी लिबरेलाइजेशन हुआ है? मैं यह भी जानना चाहता हूं कि पर्टिकुलर वीजा एसी कोई रिक्वेस्ट यू० के० गवर्नमेंट की तरफ से भी आई थी कि ब्रिटिश नेशनल के आने के लिए वीजा लिबरेलाइज किया जाय? यह रिक्वेस्ट आई भी या नहीं? दूसरी बात मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि लिबरेलाइजेशन के बाद अब वहां वीजा की कितनी एप्लीकेशन्स पेंडिंग है और पहले कितनी थी?

श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल: सभापति जी, लिबरेलाइजेशन के बाद लोगों का आना जाना बढ़ा है। बदकिस्मती से मैं फिगर्स नहीं दे पाऊंगा, लेकिन एकाध दिन में पता करके दे दूंगा। काफी बड़ी तादाद है, तादाद बढ़ी है, काफी लोग आ रहे हैं। जहां तक दूसरे देशों का ताल्लुक है, व अपने यहां इम्मीग्रेशन की पालिसी, अपनी वीजा पालिसी क्या निर्धारित करते हैं, वह उनका तरीका है। हमने कई दफा कहा है कि यह पालिसी ठीक नहीं है। लेकिन इस चीज में रेसिप्रोसिटी नहीं होती, हम अपने हिसाब से चलते हैं कि हमारे लोग यहां आ पायें। इस बात पर वह निर्भर नहीं है कि अंग्रेज यहां क्या करते हैं। अंग्रेज कहते हैं कि हम अपने यहां आने नहीं देना चाहते हैं। हम उनको कहते हैं कि आने दीजिये। यह एक अलग बात है। लेकिन मैं भी अपने यहां लोगों का आना रोक दूं, यह ठीक नहीं होगा।

श्री सभापति: उसको तो उन्होंने वेलकम किया है। उनका कहना है कि भारत के जो लोग वहां गये हुए हैं, He says that those Indians who are there able to come and it is welcome. If some of the people there foll ill or something happens, our people want

to go there. In that case, will you help them just to go there, not to settle, but to meet their people? That is what Hanspalji wants to know.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Sir, the suggestion is valid and we react to it well. We have been taking it up with Britain and the USA from time to time and I will take it up once again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes Mr. Kamal Morarka.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Sir, our experience in Britain... (*Interruptions*)...Sir, can have the attention of the honourable Minister-Sir, previously, when the Commonwealth citizens, especially from India, were to visit Britain, entry to Britain was automatic and there was no visa...(*Interruptions*)...

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No, no... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: No, Sir, There was no visa..(*Interruptions*)...It is there only for the past five or seven years. Before that we used to and I have gone... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: No... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: I have gone umpteen times and there was no visa... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: I have gone without a passport. even ... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Sir, I cannot match Mr. Swamy who travels without a passport! He says so; I have not gone to that extent! Sir, I was absolutely surprised at the stand of the India Government that visa will not be reciprocal. If Britain wants to screen every entrant into Britain, I think it is fair that we also should screen every entrant into India. On the other hand, let us suggest to Britain that let us go back to the old system and have free travel between India and Britain. That is a different concept. If the Minister says and if it is the Government of India's stand, we would like to be enlightened why the Government of India of its own volition thinks, if it suffers from inferiority complex, that Indians going to Britain need be screened while the Britishers coming to India need not be screened, I would like to understand the rationale of it.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Sir, the hon. Member has every right to differ with the policy, and I do not question that. The main point that I was trying to project is that keeping in view our own overall concept and perception of national interest we have thought it best for us to liberalise it, and I think that is going to help us. If Britain has done away with the Commonwealth practices as they used to be, it is a very sad thing. And the argument that they gave are known to you. I am not their advocate that I should convey what their feelings are. But I do feel that it is in the best interest of the world and peace and good neighbourliness that visa restrictions the world over are relaxed.

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : सभापति महोदय, मंत्री महोदय ने जो वीसा पालिसी के बारे में बताया है, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि उन्होंने बड़े ही कम शब्दों में अमनेस्टी इंटरनेशनल के बारे में कह दिया कि यह वीसा नीति के तहत नहीं आता है। मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि वीसा नीति के तहत हमने सिर्फ व्यवसाय करने के लिये ही लिस्ट नहीं बनाई हुई है बल्कि हम ऐसी भी लिस्ट बनाते हैं कि सेक्युरिटी थ्रेट किस किस से है और कि किस आदमी से कन्ट्री को यूनिटी, इन्टेग्रिटी और सेक्युरिटी को थ्रेट है और ऐसा संगठन जो हमारे मुल्क की....

श्री सभापति : यह इस सवाल से नहीं उठ रहा है ।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : सवाल वीसा का है ।

श्री सभापति : यह सवाल नहीं है । एक लाख आया और उससे आप पूरी दुनिया खोज दें तो ऐसा नहीं होगा ।

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : मैं यू० के० का बात कर रहा हूं । अमनेस्टी इंटरनेशनल का हैडक्वार्टर यू० के० में है ।

श्री सभापति : सवाल ब्रिटन से वीसा के जो रूल हैं उनको जो लिबरलाइज किया है उसके बारे में है ।

श्री सुरेन्द्र जीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : मैं उस पर आ रहा हूं । मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि अमनेस्टी इंटरनेशनल ने कभी क्या वीसा के लिये अप्लाई किया था ? क्योंकि उसका हैडक्वार्टर यू० के० में है और यू० के० से हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार ने उसका वीसा कभी रिजेक्ट किया और कभी उसको परमीशन दी । दूसरा, सेक्युरिटी थ्रेट की जो लिस्ट है, अभी यू० के० की लिस्ट में कितने लोगों का नाम दर्ज है ? पिछली सरकार के द्वारा कितनों का नाम दर्ज थी और इस सरकार के कितने नामों को हटाकर उन्हें वीसा दिया है, मंत्री महोदय यह बताने की कृपा करें ?

श्री इन्द्र कुमार गुजराल : अमनेस्टी इंटरनेशनल ने कोई वीसा के लिये अप्लीकेशन नहीं दी । जहां तक इस लिस्ट का ताल्लुक है, लिस्ट है । लेकिन आगे से काफी कम की गई है । मैं न पिछली सरकार के खिलाफ कुछ कहता हूं और न इस सरकार की सराहना में कुछ कहता हूं । लिस्टें बदलती रहती हैं हालात के मुताबिक । उस वक्त हालात कुछ और थे, इंदिरा जी के वक्त हालात कुछ और थे और बाद में हालात कुछ और हो गये । हर सरकार हालात का जायजा लेकर लिस्ट बनाती है । लेकिन यह लिस्ट आगे से कम है ।....**(व्यवधान)**....

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : लिबरलाइजेशन करने के लिये आपने क्या उपाय किये हैं यह बताने की कृपा करें । ....**(व्यवधान)**....सवाल का जवाब ही नहीं हुआ । मेरे सवाल का जवाब तो दें । सवाल का जवाब हुआ ही नहीं ।

श्री इन्द्रकुमार गुजराल : तरीका बड़ा सादा है जनाबेवाली । तरीका यह है कि हर वक्त की हालात के मुताबिक हम लोगों के काम और उन संगठनों के काम के मुताल्लिक नजर रखते हैं और उस नजर का हम जायजा लेते हैं।

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Sir, is it not a fact that a much larger number of Indians belonging to all classes, from ordinary people to others, go to the U.K. than the Britishers coming here, and because of our having very high visa charges they also have to pay rupees to the British High Commission Is it a fact that it is causing economic problem to them? And (b), is the Minister aware—I am sure he is—that a country like Indonesia has arrangement with more than 35 countries of the world where an Indonesian does not require a visa? And Indonesia does not ask for visas from those 35 countries. India is now one country from which more countries, including Botswana, are asking for visas. Botswana did not require visa from Indians and they don't have an Embassy here. We in the Ministry of External Affairs take care of their interests and the Indians are now required to have visas. Is it a fact that whereas the other countries are opening out in visas which will be beneficial, we have remained such that we Indians need visas everywhere. In that context, will this liberalisation process, what he has done with the United Kingdom, will be extended to other countries?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Sir, liberalisation is not only confined to Britain. It is universal. It is one thing. (*Interruptions*) Almost all countries. So far as visa restrictions or relaxation

by other countries are concerned, it has much to do with the immigration problem and every country makes its own assessment. I would request the hon. Member not to ask me to elaborate it further.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Certainly there is no immigration problem with Indonesia. If Indonesia can have a system for Indonesians to go to 35 countries and they permit them, we can think about it.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: I am quite willing to liberalise it.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Sir, the hon. Minister has a knack of showing innocence over a matter and look at very highly undesirable things as very desirable. May I know from the Minister whether the concept of reciprocity is unknown in the matter of visa? Sir, it is so humiliating here in India to approach for visas to different countries and the hon. Minister knows about it. So far as we are concerned, he has said that we will do what suits us. It is a very simplistic answer. May I know from the hon. Minister this thing? Does he believe that there should be some degree of reciprocity? The other countries should also show the same degree of liberality as we are showing. Or does he think that it is wholly irrelevant? If so, for what reason?

Secondly, he says that visa fee is not a fund-raising matter. Why is it not, Sir? That means that we are lossing one million pounds. Has he known of a single case when a person has given up a trip to India because the visa fee is more? It is an amazing answer that he has given. Nobody takes it into account. Therefore, my question is this. Why are we forgoing valuable foreign exchange on the plea that it is not a fund raising thing? If it is not fund-raising, then why are you charging anything at all? *It is a fund-raising proposition.*

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL: Sir, my hon. friend Mr. Salve, is an extremely good advocate for bad cases. The main point is that most of the people who come here are people of Indian origin and I have sympathy for them. If they come and tell me that visa stands in the way, I will not let that happen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The trouble is that in the Indian culture we have the concept of atithi devo bhava. How can you charge fee? (*Interruptions*) Are you opposing it or supporting it? Are you saying that atithi devo bhava should be there or not? Atithi devo bhava means that we welcome the gest as God sent.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: Our history demonstrates that when we welcome guests, we land in trouble.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So you want to change it.

*284. [The question (*Shri Jagdish Jani*) *was absent. For col.* vide cols. 37-38 infra]

Visit of Chinese Prime Minister to India

*285. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:†
SHRI KAPIL VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the press interview of the Chinese Prime Minister, Mr. Li Peng at Singapore in mid-August to the effect that he intends to visit India in the near fuure to improve bilateral relations; if so, whether there is any move to fix the timings of the propos ed visit; and

(b) what is the Chinese stand on India's latest problems with Pakistan

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Veena Verma.